

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A contracting method for making an electronic contract for provision of a commodity or service, comprising the steps of:

storing, in at least one system of one concerned party on said contract, another concerned party on said contract and a third party, description data containing a description content presented from said one concerned party to said another concerned party and electronic signature on said description content of both or either of said concerned parties before making said contract;

if said contract is made, generating, in both or either system of said concerned parties, contract data containing said description data stored in at least one system of said concerned parties and said third party or description specifying data for specifying said description data ~~content~~ and a contract content;

appending ~~executing~~, in the respective systems of the concerned parties, respective electronic signatures on said contract data of said concerned parties; and

storing, in at least one system of said concerned parties and said third party, said contract data containing the electronic signatures of said concerned parties.

Sub 2. (Currently Amended) A contracting method to be used by a covenantor for making a contract for provision of a commodity or service, comprising the steps of:

receiving a question or a request for said commodity or service from a system of a covenantee who intends to conclude said contract through a network;

appending~~adding~~ to a response to said question or request, in a system of said covenantor, a covenantor's electronic signature proving~~proof~~ that said covenantor created said response;

sending said response containing said covenantor's electronic signature~~proof~~ from the system of said covenantor to said covenantee through the network;

storing said response containing said covenantor's electronic signature~~proof~~ in at least one system of said covenantor, said covenantee, and a third party; and

if said contract is concluded between said covenantor and said covenantee, creating, in at least one system of said covenantor, said covenantee and said third party, an electronic contract document bound to said response containing said covenantor's electronic signature with a data string

determined with regard to said response containing said
covenanter's electronic signature, said electronic contract
document containing said covenantor's electronic signature and
a covenantee's electronic signature~~proof~~; and

storing, in at least one system of said covenantor, said
covenantee and said third party, said electronic contract
document bound to said response containing said covenantor's
electronic signature~~proof~~.

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3. (Currently Amended) A contracting method as claimed in
claim 2, wherein said response containing said covenantor's
electronic signature~~proof~~ includes said covenantee's
electronic signature proving~~proof~~ that said covenantee has
agreed with said response.

4. (Currently Amended) A contracting method to be used by
a covenantor for making a contract for provision of a
commodity or service, comprising the steps of:

if a question or request for said commodity or service is
received from a covenantee who intends to conclude said
contract, outputting a response to said question or request to
a system of said covenantee from a system of said covenantor;

if the system of said covenanter obtains, in response to the response thus output, a new response containing ~~with an~~ electronic signature of said covenantee ~~added thereto from the~~ system of said ~~covenanter, concluding~~ covenantee, thereby creating, in the system of said covenanter, an electronic contract between said covenanter and said covenantee about said contract, said electronic contract containing a covenanter's electronic signature and said covenantee's electronic signature;

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making, in the system of said covenanter, said electronic contract document have correspondence relationships to new the response containing ~~with~~ said covenantee's electronic signature ~~added thereto by using a data string determined with regard to~~ said new response containing ~~with~~ said covenantee's electronic signature ~~added thereto;~~ and

sending said electronic contract document from the system of said covenanter to the system of said covenantee.

5. (Currently Amended) A contracting method as claimed in claim 4, further comprising the step of:

appending ~~adding~~, in the system of said covenanter, an electronic signature of said covenanter to the response to be outputted to the system of said covenantee.

6. (Currently Amended) A method for providing a person who accepts a commodity or service with the commodity or service, comprising the steps of:

sending a question or request for provision of said commodity or service to a provider for said commodity or service through a network;

receiving a response to said question or request from said provider through the network;

appending~~adding~~ an electronic signature of said person who accepts said commodity or service to said response and then sending said response to said provider through the network;

storing said response with the electronic signature of said person who accepts said commodity or service appended~~added~~ thereto in at least one of storage units of said provider, said person who accepts said commodity or service and a third party; and

if a contract for provision of said commodity or service is concluded between said provider and said person who accepts said commodity or service, making an electronic contract document on said contract have correspondence relationships to said response containing~~with~~ an electronic signature of said

person ~~added thereto~~ by using a data string determined with regard to said response containing~~with~~ said person's electronic signature, said electronic contract document containing an electronic signature of said provider and the electronic signature of said person~~added thereto~~, and storing said electronic contract document and said response containing~~with~~ the electronic signature of said person ~~added thereto~~ thus having correspondence relationships in at least one system of said provider, said person and said third party.

B 1 7. (Currently Amended) A method for processing a contract to be used by at least one of concerned parties who make a contract for provision of a commodity or service and a third party, comprising the steps of:



C 1 creating a hash value of description data containing a description content about said commodity or service having been transferred between the concerned parties before concluding said contract and an electronic signature~~data~~ proving that both or either of the concerned parties has created or accepted said description content;

inserting said hash value in contract data containing said contract content therein; ~~and~~

appending respective electronic signatures of the
concerned parties to said contract data containing said
contract content and said hash value; and

storing said contract data containing said electronic
signatures~~description content and said hash value~~ in at least
one system of the concerned parties and said third party.

8. (Currently Amended) A system for processing a contract
to be used by at least one of concerned parties who make a
contract for provision of a commodity or service and a third
party, comprising:



a processing unit for creating a data string determined
with regard to description data containing a description
content about a commodity or service and an electronic
signature~~data~~ for providing that both or either of the
concerned parties has created or accepted said description
content, said description data having been transferred between
the concerned parties about said contract before concluding
said contract; and

another processing unit for making contract data have
correspondence relationships with said description data by
using said data string, said contract data including said
contract content and respective electronic signatures of the

concerned parties, and for storing said contract data and said description data thus having the correspondence relationships in a storage unit.

9. (Previously Presented) A system for processing a contract as claimed in claim 8, wherein said data string is a hash value of said description data.

10. (Previously Presented) A system for processing a contract as claimed in claim 8, wherein said data string is said description data per se.

11. Canceled.

12. (Previously Presented) A system for processing a contract as claimed in claim 8, further comprising another processing unit for making a description processing program for describing said contract content on an electronic contract document about said contract have correspondence relationships with said contract data.

13. (Currently Amended) A storage unit to be used by at least one of the concerned parties for making a contract for

provision of a commodity or service and a third party, wherein
said storage unit,

stores description data containing a description content
about said commodity or service having been transferred
between concerned parties about a contract before concluding
said contract said description data being created in both or
either of systems of the concerned parties and containing
electronic signatures of either of the systems of the
concerned parties about said description content; and

A (if said contract is concluded, stores contract data
containing said contract content, said contract data being
created in both or either of systems of the concerned parties
and containing respective electronic signatures of the
concerned parties about said contract content; and

C (both or either of the systems of the concerned parties
making said description data and said contract data have
correspondence relationships to each other by using asaid data
string with regard to said description data.

14. (Currently Amended) A program sending device for
sending a program for enabling a computer to execute a
predetermined process to a network, said predetermined process
comprising:

a process for creating data string determined with regard to description data containing a description content about a commodity or service having been transferred between concerned parties about a contract before concluding said contract and an electronic signature data for proving that both or either of the concerned parties has created or accepted said description content, and

a process for making contract data containing a contract content about provision of said commodity or service and said description data have correspondence relationships to each other by using said data string, said contract data containing respective electronic signatures of the concerned parties, and for storing said contract data and said description data thus having correspondence relationships in a storage unit.

15. (Currently Amended) A recording medium for recording a contract processing program for enabling a contract processing system to execute a contract process for processing a contract for provision of a commodity or service, wherein said contract process comprises comprising:

a process for creating contract data containing said contract content and a negotiating ID determined between concerned parties on said contract;

a process for retrieving, using said negotiating ID as a key, description data corresponding to said contract data from multiple description data containing a description content about said commodity or service having been transferred between the concerned parties about said contract before concluding said contract;

a process for inserting a data string determined with regard to said retrieved description data in said contract data; and

a process for adding an electronic signature of at least one of said concerned parties to said contract data containing said data string.

16. (Previously Presented) A recording medium as claimed in claim 15, wherein said process for inserting said data string is executed to insert said retrieved description data in said contract data as said data string.

17. (Previously Presented) A recording medium as claimed in claim 15, wherein said process for inserting said data string is executed to calculate a hash value of said retrieved description data and to insert the hash value of said description data in said contract data as said data string.

18. (Original) A recording medium as claimed in claim 15, wherein said contracting process includes a process for determining whether or not either of the electronic signatures of said concerned parties added to said description data is correct and a process for adding the electronic signature of the other concerned party to said description data if the electronic signature of one of said concerned parties added to said description data is determined to be correct.

19. (Previously Presented) A recording medium as claimed in claim 15, wherein said contracting process further includes a process for describing said contract content on an electronic contract document on said contract and a process for inserting a data string determined with regard to a describing program for executing said describing process in said contract data.

20. (Previously Presented) A recording medium as claimed in claim 15, wherein said contracting process further includes a process for inserting a contract content display template for creating from said contract content a contract content

display data to be outputted to an output unit in said contract data.

21. (Currently Amended) A recording medium as claimed in claim 15, wherein said process for appending~~adding~~ a signature on said contract data is executed to append~~add~~ said electronic signature on said contract data if a permission for adding said electronic signature to said contract data is received.

22-26. (Canceled)

27. (New) A contracting method as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

a hash value of said description content is created, and the hash value of said description content is encrypted by using a private key of either or both of the concerned parties, whereby the electronic signature of either or both of said concerned parties is created; and

a hash value of said contract data is created, and the hash value of said contract data is encrypted by using respective private keys of the concerned parties, whereby the respective electronic signatures of the concerned parties are created.

28. (New) A contracting method as claimed in claim 1,
wherein said description specifying data is a hash value of
said description data.